

# FAITH & FORM

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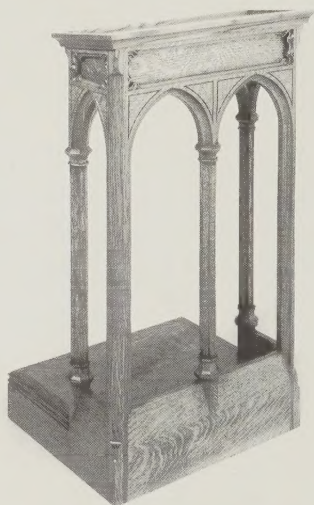


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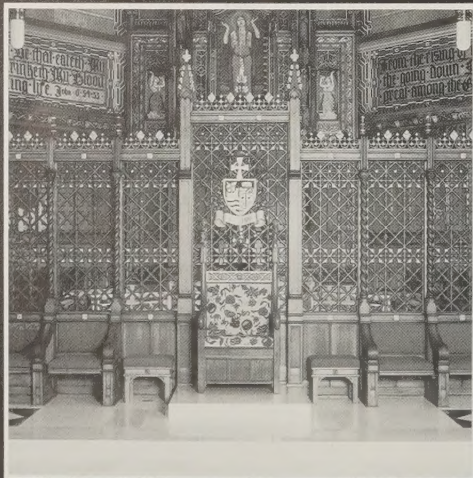
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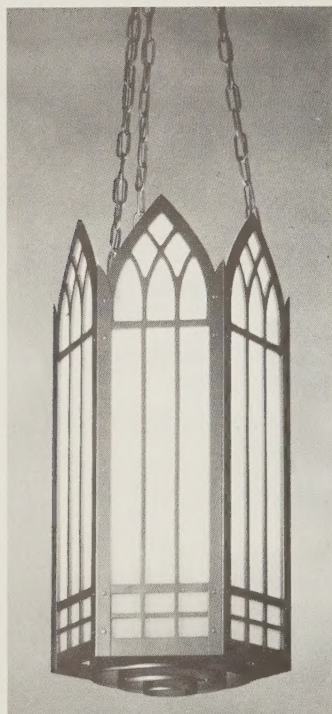
When Governor Weld of Massachusetts presented the Commonwealth Awards for 1993 at the State House in Boston, one of the recipients was Allan Rohan Crite. Allan Crite has been involved with painting, drawing and mixed media in his community of South Boston since 1916. "I'm just a storyteller," he explains. "I look upon art as communication and believe that all art is a part of the community of man. Everything you see on this planet is tied into the one thing: community."

Crite attended the Harvard Extension School from 1950-1968 and was invited to be its librarian. He has written and illustrated three books: *Three Spirituals: Were You There?*, *All Glory* and *The Rediscovery of the Cultural Heritage of the U.S.*

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## Notes & Comments

### *A Minority Developers Program: The First of Its Kind*

Organized at the MIT Center for Real Estate, this program is designed to help individual entrepreneurs broaden their portfolios to include new products and new markets—such as large scale residential, mixed-use or other commercial projects—and to enhance partnership with others. The one-hundredth student graduates this summer in real estate development and many of the graduates hold prominent positions today. Originally offered only in Boston, it now includes participants from throughout New England and hopefully will expand this year to Detroit, Indianapolis and St. Louis. For information: Mass. Institute of Technology, 77 Mass. Ave., #3-415, Cambridge, MA 02139.

### *Howard Roark At Fifty*

The May *Architecture* magazine carried an interesting article on the 50th anniversary of Ayn Rand's book *The Fountainhead*. Many architects admit that this book had a major influence in their decision to enter the profession. The article quotes statements by E. Fay Jones, Susan Maxman, Richard Meier, Kevin Roche, Vincent Scully, Robert A.M. Stern, Stanley Tigerman, James Wines, and Frank Lloyd Wright. The passing years have convinced most that as dramatic as Rand's Roark was, he did architecture a disservice. Championing Modernism over Classicism, he designed in isolation and put building on a pedestal to be admired. He made little effort to design structures that work with urban design or that were site sensitive. Read the book again to refresh your memory. It still sells 100,000 copies a year.

### *A Worthy Recipient*

For over 27 years David Castro-Blanco, FAIA, has encouraged minority and disadvantaged professionals. His firm Castro-Blanco, Piscioneri and Associates, has sponsored and funded an architectural competition to encourage Hispanics to enter the profession, and has played a key role in educational programs for high school students. He has been an active force in inner city/redevelopment, having designed more than 14,500 housing units for New York City. It is certainly appropriate for him to receive the Whitney M. Young Jr. Citation from the AIA for significant contributions to society. Congratulations!

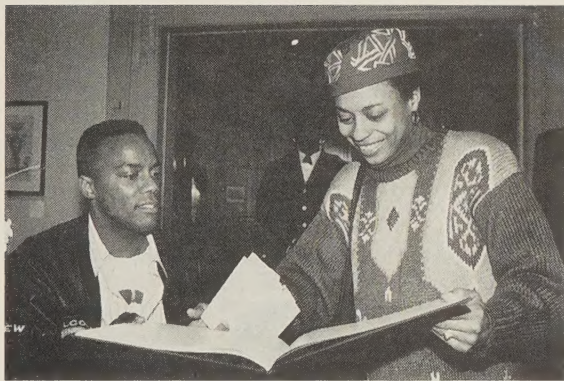
### *Signs of Grace*

This is the title of a videotape produced by New York Landmarks Conservancy's Sacred Sites Program. It depicts the work of congregations to restore, repair and maintain their churches, synagogues and meeting houses. This video is an important tool to inspire a congregation or building committee to address issues such as fundraising, construction and community outreach. Fifteen minutes long, it is the perfect length to lead into creative discussion. Architects, clergy, educators, board members—anyone who sees architecture as a sign of grace will appreciate having this video in their library. Cost \$15 including shipping from: N.Y. Landmarks Conservancy, 141 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10010, (212) 995-5260.

### *Artists Play A Special Role in Culture*

The Maritain Art Institute is a recently formed nonprofit corporation dedicated to the development of a vital, contemporary Judeo-Christian culture. Current trustees include Deal Hudson of Fordham University, Anthony Simon of the Yves Simon Institute and Joseph Schickel of Schickel Studios. A recent exhibition, *Friends of Maritain: Chagall and Rouault*, in Loveland, Ohio focused on the special role these artists played in the development of Judeo-Christian culture. It was in Paris in the 1920s that Jacques Maritain, a Catholic philosopher and his Jewish wife, Raissa, brought Rouault and Chagall together. For information: Maritain Art Institute, 200 West Loveland Ave., Loveland, OH 45140, (513) 677-9865.





Jack Travis at book signing of his book, *African American Architects in Current Practice*.

## An Important Initiative

Cooper-Hewitt in New York City recently initiated a program designed to foster dialogue on the contribution of diverse cultures to architecture and design. One of the first events was to present Jack Travis' book, *African American Architects in Current Practice*, followed by a panel discussion moderated by Beverly Hall Lawrence, staff writer for *Newsday*. Participants included architectural historian Michael Henry Adams, J. Max Bond, Jr. of Davis, Brody & Associates, Jack Travis and Roberta Washington, Architect P.C. This was one of many more events planned.

## The Year of Interreligious Understanding

Despite world problems that appear in every newspaper, 1993 has been named the Year of Interreligious Understanding in honor of the centennial of the World Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893. It was therefore heartening to witness something new—a recent event in Sharon, Massachusetts, when ground was broken for a new Islamic Center in New England. Representatives from Catholicism, Judaism, Protestantism, Greek Orthodox and religious leaders for peace in the Middle East participated. There are now 20 mosques in New England, including the basement hall of Harvard's Memorial Hall to serve the growing number of students. There are a dozen Hindu temples and 25 Buddhist temples, as well as Jain, Sikh, Zoroastrian, Vendanta and Bahai temples.

## A Global Museum

Next to Glasgow's 12th century cathedral is a new museum which calls itself the first comprehensive public museum devoted to a global view of religious life and art. It highlights the religious experiences of Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Jews. The first Zen garden in Britain is found in the museum courtyard and items displaying all faiths are shown in the galleries. The museum is open daily and free.

## Omission

Credit to Hawk Photography should have been given in the last issue for photographs of Thomas Fisher and Mark Alden Branch, editors of *Progressive Architecture*.

## GO TELECOM: A Pilot Project

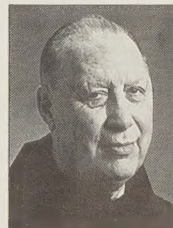
The SS Constantine and Helen Cathedral Community (Greek Orthodox) in Brooklyn, N.Y. is pioneering with a pilot project in modern communications for the 21st century. Steven Papadatos (IFRAA member) and Fiorentino Associates are designing a television broadcast capability which will allow broadcast and reception via satellite of live liturgies and major social, cultural and educational events. If the project is successful it is hoped that it will become a design prototype that will link all Greek Orthodox churches across North and South America in a highly interactive communications network. For inquiries: (800) 888-6835.

## New Theology Review

The February issue of this American Catholic journal was devoted to *Art, Culture and Religion*. Single back copies are \$6.50 and can be ordered from the Liturgical Press, Collegeville, MN. 56321.

## The Bene Award

*Modern Liturgy* has announced that this year's Bene Award has been presented to Frank Kacmarcek, a pioneer and definitive liturgical design consultant. It was Frank who acted as IFRAA's authoritarian guide through St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minn. at our meeting two years ago. We are all heirs to his rich legacy of aesthetic and religious sensitivity. □



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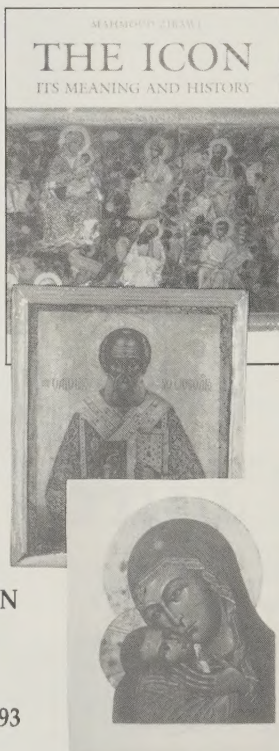
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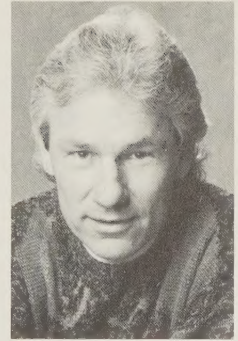
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# ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS AND THE ARCHITECT

By David Barrett



When asked to participate in a discussion on "Ethical Implications in the Environment for Architects in Architectural Education—Biting the Bullet," I am drawn to look at the context (as any rightfully schooled architect naturally would) in which we find ourselves. What are the forces driving the world, and how are we reacting to these forces? What is the role of architect in the "New World Order," the "Post-Industrial Age," the "Emerging Paradigm," the "Post-Modern Era?" All these labels suggest more of *where we aren't* rather than *where we are*, or even who we are. No wonder we sense confusion and insecurity. As we straddle the cusp of transition, it is the creative individual, responding to the tension between form and chaos, that seizes the opportunity to challenge and redefine with new symbols, new (self made) collective images that transcend the darkness. But to do this we must step back and look not only at our culture but at ourselves. What is blocking our way? How may we begin to remove obstructions and get on with creative acts that heal, rather than entangle?

Matthew Fox, a priest, recently silenced by the Vatican for his outspoken opinions on a creation spirituality that recognizes the interrelatedness of all life,

DAVID BARRETT, AIA is a practicing architect in Boulder, Colorado, and a visiting lecturer at the University of Colorado's College of Environmental Design. In keeping with the philosophy expressed here, his firm is designing a residential high school for at-risk students with the principles of experiential education and environmental stewardship in mind. It will be built near Rocky Mountain Park. His article is an edited version of a paper presented at the AIA's Education Program on Environmental Imperatives and Architectural Education in the 1990s.

sees celebration rather than guilt as motivator for all levels of creation. He speaks of an "entombed western civilization" and acknowledges "five boulders that are entombing us as a people."

The first boulder he speaks of is *Acedia*, a medieval term that means depression, but also encompasses cynicism and pessimism. Thomas Aquinas defined *acedia* as "a sluggishness of mind that neglects to begin good." It is marked by a preoccupation with death. We get aroused so easily for war. What does it take to arouse

Have you "become someone quite different" than the artist who chose to make buildings?

people for people, for compassion, for the living? Where is the vitality of our political systems, our economic systems, educational systems?

Walk into most design schools and you'll sense a predisposition for a pessimistic, cynical, pseudo-deconstructivist design language. This is the way being led by the architectural heroes and the conformist architectural journals. If we are going to pull ourselves out of this depressive quicksand, we must acknowledge that although the symbolic expression of our demise has its place in art, it is a trap if we become comfortable with the darkness as an end in itself. I would like to think that as the Scandinavians celebrate the light after a long dark winter, so can we play with illumination as a

way out of our cultural doldrums. Our schools should be beacons of light for our future.

A second boulder is *Apathy*, derived from two Greek words meaning "no passion." Fox observed that "the antidote to apathy and to *acedia* is to fall in love. To rediscover our erotic attachment to what is beautiful in the universe. That's where we get our passion. If we fall in love with creation deeper and deeper, we will respond to its endangerment with passion."

We seem to have lost our passion. We were first attracted to our profession by a resonance with beauty. In the cynical, dog-eat-dog world, this quality is often devalued to the point that we succumb to this bottom line mentality that sees architecture as a commodity that has value only if the numbers work. We become someone quite different than the artist that chose to make buildings.

Addiction, says Fox, is the largest boulder imprisoning our culture and keeping us from discovering freedom for all. It keeps us out of touch with our inner selves. Not only are we addicted to drugs and alcohol, but also to television, the automobile, shopping, religion, work, money and power. We are capable of turning anything into an addiction. Our personal addictions, whatever they are, limit our effectiveness as facilitators. In fear of losing our client, our job, our position, we give in and produce the expected, the safe, the unchallenged. We do what promises us approval and our inner selves, our creativity becomes evermore inaccessible. Only by getting in touch with what Fox calls our "mystical natures" can we overcome our addictions.

The fourth boulder is *Anthropocentrism*, that is, the bias toward interpreting everything in terms of the human. Fox



states that "when we put ourselves in the center of the universe, we tend to miss the abundance of unconditional love in the universe. The angel that rolls away the boulder of anthropocentrism is cosmology."

If architecture mirrors the cosmological paradigm of a particular time, what might be the possibilities for a living architecture? An architecture that reflects our connections versus screaming for attention as separate and dominant. What might an architecture of compassion look like, if we consider the homeless as part of ourselves, the third world as just an extension of our larger body? What if resources were considered our common dowry to be honored and conserved versus wasted and fought over? What if we looked at a building site as the realm of all the living versus the quest for maximum development return?

The possibilities of an expanded, wholistic definition of "organic architecture" begin to tease us as we look deeper at how we are all part of a truly universal

organic process. In light of this new cosmology, does it make sense for our schools to teach any subject in isolation, to look at any design problem as a distinct object, to continue to waste our inquisitive minds on irrelevant exercises?

***It is time we wake up!  
We can't afford to be  
drowsy and  
disempowered.***

The final boulder blocking our way is *Avarice*—or greed. Aquinas says, "The greed for gain knows no limit and tends to infinity." This idea of greed suggests a void our culture seems to be caught up in, frantically trying to fill with *more*. This fearful quest to "get mine before it runs out" sees us consuming the landscape, wildlife, resources and forests at a rate only controlled by the economics of a

dwindling supply system.

It is time we wake up! We can't afford to be drowsy and disempowered. As form givers of our cities, communities and buildings, the architect needs to participate in the big picture. Turning on our creative juices only when the contract is signed puts us in the limited position of reflecting the dysfunction. There is a need for the interconnected thinker—a voice that considers the implications of our actions. We must be willing to extend ourselves, to stand up for what our inner selves know as the truth. At that point we will be valued, as we value ourselves.

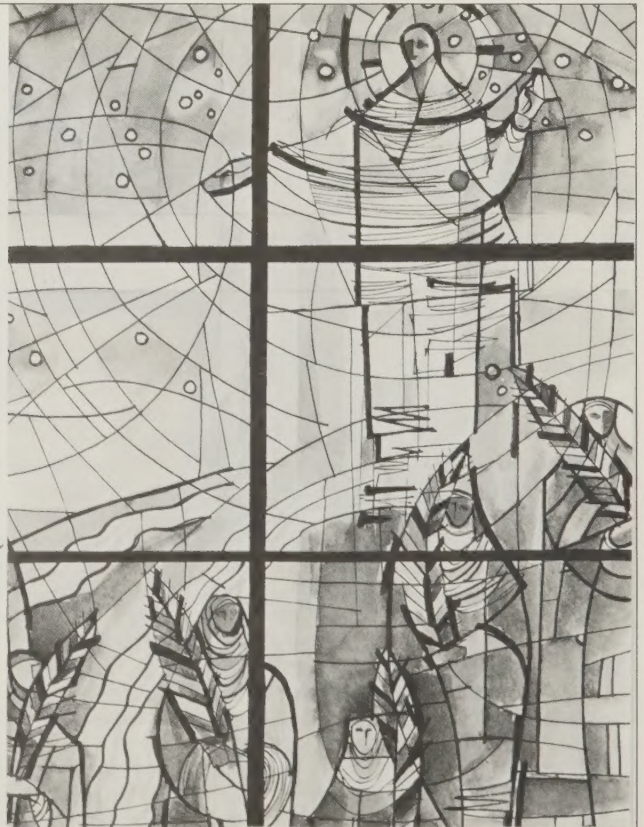
"Waking up is what education ought to be about. Waking up to life and its mysteries and its solvable problems and the ways to solve the problems and celebrate the mysteries. Waking up to the interdependencies of all things, to the threat to our global village, to the power within the human race to create alternatives, to the obstacles usually entrenched in economic and political shibboleths that prevent our waking up."—Matthew Fox □

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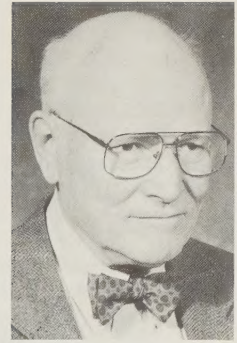
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# LIVING ON THE HIGH WIRE

By Edward A. Sövik



How do we choose between the need for bread and the desire for beauty? It is beauty that breaks our silences, speaks the unspeakable, and beckons us into the presence of God.

I agreed from inadvertence or overconfidence some time ago to undertake a study of an issue that all of us who think of ourselves as both artists and conscientious people struggle with.

How do we best spend our money—for architecture and vestments or for housing and clothing? How do we choose between the need for bread and the desire for beauty? Should we buy music or medicine? Some sage, Zarathustra, I think, said "If you have a loaf, sell half of it and buy a flower." What if your neighbor has neither bread nor a flower?

I believe that many of you would say we should buy beauty. Perhaps we wouldn't say "Of course we should!" because we are not entirely at ease about it. Our answer would rise mostly out of intuition, I think. We have the *feeling*, the intuition that is right to make and buy art, and we think that history and most of our friends agree with us. But at the same time we are not sure we can trust our feelings, or theirs. Intuitions are not infallible; they tend to be a confusion of superficial assumptions and profound wisdom, of ambiguities, hopes, desires, even selfishness. So we try to test our intuitions by putting them under the scrutiny of reason.

But, though I want to be reasonable, and start with *fact* like a syllogism, I find I

have to start with the most basic intuition: that sense that exists in every culture, from the most archaic times, the intuition that there is a Mystery in which all creation has its being. There are many names for God. And the names point to but do not resolve the Mystery. This commitment to the idea of God does not ultimately depend on reason, no matter how comforting it is to know that there have been rational arguments for the existence of God. (There are rational arguments against the existence of God, too). But it is not altogether comfortable to be a believer, because in the words of the weather reporter the situation is "partly cloudy" or even "mostly cloudy." The object of our faith is a Mystery, at once awesome and distant, unapproachable, but also attractive, beguiling and somehow friendly. Intuition is a start! We are symbol makers or symbol finders, for the sake of communication and because we look for ways through which we can understand the nature of things, through which we can break the silence.

## Symbol Systems

There are, somebody worked out, 437 kinds of symbols, but for my purposes there are two kinds. *One* is the rational sort, sometimes called *discursive*; our prose language and the symbols of mathematics are examples. We learn the symbols; they engage our intellects, starting in the earliest childhood; and we can communicate through the diagrams we make, the sounds we hear or the letters we see. We can communicate with great accuracy if we use the symbols for which there are agreed-upon meanings. This is the language of logic and reason, the discursive system through which we give order to our world.

There are limits to what can be accom-

plished with this system. It may not affect your behavior, or the intensity of your faith and commitments, no matter how logical and organized it is. That's depressing but true.

The second kind of symbol is called *affective*. These symbols don't engage the intellect, but our feelings. They are the symbols of art, music, poetry, dance, drama, architecture. They are not so concerned with meaning, as is the rational. Meaning can vary among people and even change from time to time. The understanding of the mind and of the heart is separate.

The discursive system works because we learn the symbols, but nobody can teach the other system. Understanding comes in part with birth, and in part with experience. It is also true that though Christians take great pains to apply the mind to matters of faith, it is in the emotions that faith finds its most authentic habitation, and its motivation to action. It is the poetic parts of scripture that we most love—the psalms, the parables, the interludes of prose poetry in the Pauline letters, the drama of the Passion story.

This affective symbol is also echoed in our response to Nature. We have all had experiences in our lives when our surroundings urge themselves upon us so that we seem to have a heightened consciousness and a sense of a transcendental Presence. They are called numinous experiences and bring us to a *feeling* of wonder, a wonder not of bewilderment, but the wonder that is like awe. That is why such experiences become symbolic of the Mystery. Some people think that the only proper place of worship is outdoors in the beauty of the natural world where we open ourselves consciously to the presence of God. I think all of us would admit that a setting of beauty is

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proper because we perceive the existence of God through our intuition, as we perceive the beautiful. We cannot make a formula for beauty; it too is a mystery—and only a mystery can be an appropriate symbol for the Mystery.

This then is the rationalization for the investment that churches make in the arts: only the beautiful is an acceptable symbol of the Divine. It is beauty that breaks our silences, speaks the unspeakable, and beckons us into the presence of God.

### What Does Scripture Say?

Surely, the ugly, the commonplace is unworthy and bad taste is a heresy. To me the architect is not only justified in searching for beauty—he *must* do so. But still I am not entirely comfortable. When I look at the scriptures I don't find a lot of encouragement for the arts. They tell us in some detail about the way the Children of Israel were instructed to adorn the tabernacle and the ark of the Covenant. And later it was Solomon's Temple that was to be an architectural and artistic extravagance for the habitation of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And we are led to believe by the description of vestments and artifacts that the arts were in full flower in temple worship.

But Jesus was not a part of that system. It is true that Jesus was himself an artist, a kind of poet, and it is true that he did not support the complaints of those who thought the vessel of nard with which he was anointed was too expensive. But it is also true that he was upset by the extensions of worship into the temple court and that he ousted the purveyors of sacrifice.

We do not know that he ever took part in temple worship as an adult. There was an occasion on the Mount of Transfiguration when he didn't want his disciples to memorialize the event by building shrines on the site; this could be construed to mean he didn't value architecture or permanent arts. He didn't talk directly about beauty as far as the record indicates except for comparing the lilies of the field to Solomon's glories; which may sound like a wry comment on the futility of the arts. Or was it the futility of extravagant magnificence? It is surely clear that Jesus' life and ministry found its focus in humanitarian service. He lived, apparently, from hand to mouth, without concern for art or artistic things.

How then, can those who profess to follow Jesus get immersed in the arts,

when the world calls for the grocer and the tailor and the physician? Calls for justice, compassion and honesty. We all know this is no idle question. Down through the years innumerable Christians have taken it seriously and have believed that to follow Jesus means to live as he did. To these Christians the arts are a seductive delusion, a temptation and a snare. Should we then give our time and our money to the "real" needs of the people, wherever they suffer from hunger, disease, or injustice rather than art?

### History of the Church

We know that the earliest (232 A.D.) known church building was a residence at Dura-Europus that was converted into a permanent place of worship with decorative and symbolic artistry.

Seventy years after this remodeling, the church in Algerian Certā had to exist more or less secretly, and again the place of worship was a private home. But listen to the trove of liturgical artifacts confiscated in a raid by authorities:

2 golden chalices  
6 silver chalices  
6 silver dishes  
slippers  
47 pairs of women's slippers

What is impressive to those of us who deal with liturgical art is the richness with which these Christians endowed their liturgies. Even though they were in danger they did not act like refugees or minimalists. This gives us encouragement, does it not, to surround our liturgies with beautiful things despite difficult times?

Again, in Paris at the Abbey of St. Denis in the first half of the 12th century, a remarkable abbot named Suger rebuilt a three hundred year old church with a new vision. Architectural historians regard him as the person who initiated the changes that turned Romanesque into Gothic. He tore down a square-ended Romanesque choir and in its stead built a chevet with nine chapels in a semi-circle with trapezoidal bays, pointed arches and large stained glass windows. It was a work of imagination, founded on a strong liturgical mindset.

The Cistercian, St. Bernard, was vigorously critical of Suger:

"... And further, in your cloisters, under the eyes of the brethren engaged in reading, what business has there this ridiculous monstrosity, that amazing mis-shapen shapeliness and shapely mis-shapeness? On all sides there

appears so rich and so amazing a variety of forms that it is more delightful to read the forms than the manuscripts, and to spend the whole day in admiring these things, piece by piece, rather than in meditating on the Law Divine."

But note that his objection was not the diversion of money from the poor, but the distraction he thought the arts presented. The Cistercian scribes were forbidden to decorate their manuscripts with illuminated figures except for that of the crucifixion, and their church buildings were relatively undecorated though well proportioned and well detailed in their beauty.

We must admit that we too can be distracted by art. And we too can become worshippers of beauty rather than worshippers of God, focusing on the symbol as the end rather than the means. If beauty is the portal of transcendence, we can be tempted to so admire the portal that we never pass through.

I believe that one of the problems of our generation is one posed with all good intentions by the preservationists. There are some who would like every old church building to be turned into a semi-museum, where the ancient is recovered and reproduced, whether the liturgy is served or not. Thus the building and its art bring to mind our past but not our future.

Puritan churchmanship no longer exists, so it is not strange that their meeting houses are now museums. But the seventeenth century had much in common with the community with its focus on the Word and Sacraments. Art seemed to them a sweet but soporific nectar. It is possible that we ourselves are like them, wandering a seductive path so centered on the *things* of the liturgy that we have lost the meaning behind the symbols. We waver, we teeter.

### The Tight Rope

William Willimon, a theologian at Duke University, writes of the pain of the world as it is, in contrast to the world of beauty and order as God wants it to be. (*Christian Century*, 10-19-83)

"The very foundation of any persistent Christian commitment to human liberation is our keeping taut the tension between the world as it is and the world as God intends it to be."

That, I believe, is where we have to establish our position, walking the tight rope.

There has been criticism about the



"edifice" complex that has afflicted many suburban congregations. Why so much money on architecture when it should go to hospitals, schools and the poor? A committee wrote to me from an opulent suburb that they wished to build a new church that would stand as a witness to their sympathy with the poor. They wanted it built with the very humblest of materials and the least expensive construction possible, so that people could see

entry and mission. But these were not long lived as a rule. A denominational executive told me that of 23 new parishes under his guidance, one decided to be a house church. The following year, in surveying financial records, he discovered that the house church contributed less to benevolence than 21 others. It does seem that the people who keep the tension taut, who strain for beauty, often strain most for justice and mercy.

The Presence of the Lord will go home with the people and each home will be come God's house. This kind of venture into multi functional space does not resolve the tension between buying art or buying bread. But it meets the tension with candor. It has long precedent, and is consistent with secular faith. So we live in tension and that is the way we *must* live, and that is what makes life more than existence.



"Vision from the High Wire," a sketch by Cecilia Levy.

that they were not focusing on their own comfort. I knew something about the residences of their area and there was no evidence that the congregation focused less on comfort than people in similar suburbs where church buildings were of more grandeur.

I know of some house-churches where people abjured a building altogether with intent that the funds be used in min-

I believe that those of us who are concerned for *both* beauty and servanthood have an option. We can plan our places of worship carefully so that they are good servants of the liturgy and are hospitable places for serving others' needs—needs that are non liturgical and community oriented rather than for parish only.

When the liturgies have ended and community functions have concluded

Most of you will remember the Flying Wallendas, the family that did high wire work in the circus for so many years. It was the senior Wallenda who gave us a sentence to remember: "To be on the high wire is *living* and everything else is waiting." They had their failures on the high wire as we have ours, but their safety net was usually there. Ours is too, always. It is called *Grace*.

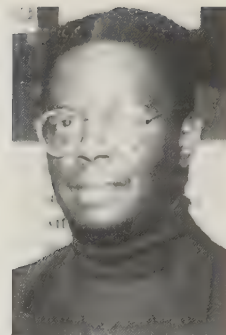
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# A PIONEERING AFRICAN-AMERICAN ARCHITECT IN ALABAMA

Wallace A. Rayfield, 1874-1941

By Vinson E. McKenzie



Vinson E. McKenzie

Wallace A. Rayfield was born in Macon, Georgia, May 10, 1874. One account of his earlier life states that his mother, a graduate of Atlanta University, died when he was 12 years old and he was raised in Washington, D.C. by an aunt. But another account states that he remained in the South until his sixteenth year before going to Washington to enter the Preparatory Department of Howard University. While in Macon he was taught by Miss Lucy G. Laney, a noted educator of the African-American race. At Howard University, he earned a B.S. degree in 1896 in Classics. After two years of further study, he earned a certificate in Architecture in 1898 from Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York. In 1899, after studying an additional year, he received his B. Arch. degree from Columbia University.

Rayfield was employed by A.B. Mullett and Company Architects, Washington, D.C., for two years while pursuing his educational goals. Better known for his work as the Department of Treasury's supervising architect (1866-1884), Mullett served as mentor to Rayfield in gaining practical architectural experience. In

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*African-American Architects and Builders: A Historical Overview*. McKenzie holds an undergraduate degree in History from Albany State College and a Master's in Library Science from Atlanta University. He is a member at-large of the Alabama Historical Commission, and the Black Heritage Council.



Wallace A. Rayfield portrait from W.A. Rayfield: Pioneer Black Architect of Birmingham, Alabama by Charles A. Brown

1899, Rayfield was recruited by Booker T. Washington to teach architectural drawing at Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute. He was the second educated African-American architect that Washington recruited, Robert R. Taylor (1868-1943) was the first. Taylor was the first African-American to obtain an architectural degree in America, graduating from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1892.

During Rayfield's teaching career, several of his students left Tuskegee with architecture certificates and went on to schools of architecture to obtain their professional degrees. Among them was William Sidney Pittman and Vertner W. Tandy. Pittman and Tandy became key

figures in the pioneering history of African-Americans in architecture. Pittman graduated from Drexel Institute in 1903. In 1907, his plans for the Negro Building at the Jamestown Exposition launched him into the spotlight as one of America's most competent architects. He was the first African-American to win a major architectural competition, also the first African-American architect in Texas. Vertner W. Tandy graduated from Cornell University in 1908 and started his firm that same year in New York City. He was the first registered African-American architect in the State of New York.

Rayfield's students had done well. Failing to get a raise, Rayfield tendered his resignation September 23, 1907, but Booker T. Washington refused to accept it. However, on October 15, 1907, he did accept it and Rayfield moved to Birmingham, Alabama and set up his architectural practice. In 1908, Booker T. Washington wrote the following reference for Rayfield:

#### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that Mr. W.A. Rayfield is a graduate of Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York—Columbia University, New York, N.Y. He was a valuable man, and voluntarily severed his relations with the school. His qualifications are such as to fit him for doing any work of an architectural nature that he accepts. I am glad to bear testimony to this effect.

Booker T. Washington, Principal

Rayfield did teach again briefly, at the Industrial High School (later renamed A.H. Parker High School), Birmingham, Alabama, 1919-1920. At the time he start-



ed his practice, there were no other African-American architects with an office in Alabama. Robert R. Taylor was on the teaching faculty at Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute and later he and a young architect, Louis Hudson Persley (1888-1932), a Lincoln University and Carnegie Institute of Technology graduate, set up practice in Tuskegee.

A recent check with the Alabama Board for Registration of Architects in Montgomery, Alabama, reported no registration licensing for Wallace Rayfield. By law, architects were not required to be registered in Alabama until 1931. Perhaps Rayfield's age was the deciding factor that kept him from seeking registration. In 1931, he was nearing his sixtieth birthday.

Robert R. Taylor's registration number was #43, making him the first registered African-American architect in Alabama. Rayfield pursued his work with great enthusiasm and specialized in ecclesiastical architecture. Around 1909, he was selected as the official architect for the A.M.E. Zion denomination throughout the U.S.A. and Africa. This work included all churches, parsonages and other work desired by the A.M.E. Zion Church. Included were the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, constructed 1909-1911, the Sixth Avenue Baptist Church (old), the Trinity Baptist Church, and the Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion Church, all of Birmingham, Alabama. He also did work outside of Alabama, including the Ebenezer Baptist Church of Chicago, Illinois, and many others.

After moving to Birmingham, Rayfield collaborated with Thomas C. Windham of Windham Brothers Construction Company, to build many new buildings in the black community. From this collaboration the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, the Sixth Avenue Baptist Church (old), Trinity Baptist Church, Saint Paul's Episcopal Church of Batesville, Arkansas, and many others were built.

As Birmingham grew, so did its black population. Families could afford to build better homes. During the early years of the twentieth century, the Smithfield residential community became home to all classes of black citizens, including many of the city's most prominent black professionals and white collar workers. Five of these homes were designed by Wallace Rayfield and built by T.C. Windham & Son. These included the residences of Dr. A.M. Brown, R.A. Blount, a contractor; A.H. Parker, an edu-



16th Street Baptist Church, Birmingham. From *Downtown Birmingham: Architectural and Historical Walking Tour guide*



Dome of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, Birmingham. From *Ebony magazine*, April 1993



cator, E.A. Brown, an attorney, and John Coar, a merchant. Rayfield and Windham also resided in Smithfield. There were several large black congregational churches built by the collaboration such as the Trinity Baptist Church. Today some of these structures have been reviewed for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Rayfield also served as a mentor for young African American architects. In 1913, he employed Alphonso Reveron and Angel Whatts, both graduates of Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute.

At the time of the construction of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, neither Rayfield nor Windham had any idea that this church would be remembered for more than its architecture. On September 15, 1963, during the Civil Rights struggle, a bomb exploded near the sanctuary, taking the lives of four innocent girls: Denise McNair, Cynthia Wesley, Addie Mae Collins, and Carol Robertson. From that moment on, the structure has remained in the national and international spotlight. During its reconstruction, stained glass windows with images of a crucified black Christ designed by John Petts were donated by the people of Wales.

Today, as a salute to the Civil Rights movement, the city of Birmingham has included the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, the Kelly Ingram Park, and the new Birmingham Civil Rights Institute as the newest symbols of hope and cultural celebration. Designed by the black architectural firms of Bond, Ryder, James of New York City and Robert L. Brown Associates of Decatur, Georgia as the architect of record, this new \$12 million museum and research facility opened in November 1992. It was built directly across the street from the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church with its main entrance facing the Kelly Ingram Park, embracing the old with the new. The landscaping of the newly redesigned Kelly Ingram Park with its colorful patterned brick sidewalks stretches through the intersection of 16th Street at 5th and 6th Avenues to bind these three important landmarks together. Kelly Ingram Park was the scene of water-hosing of children and adults during Birmingham's civil rights struggle. There is a calmness to this new architecture which is ironic considering all the turmoil that has taken place in this area. Now it is truly a "place of revolution and reconciliation" as its new theme heralds. Rayfield would be proud.

Rayfield was married twice. His first wife was Jennie M. Hutchins. Rayfield of Clarksville, Tennessee. Jennie was a graduate of the Industrial Department at Tuskegee. She died in 1929. He later married Bessie Fulwood Rogers. Rayfield in 1932. After a long distinguished career terminated with declining health, Wallace Rayfield died on February 28, 1941. In 1980,

his modified Romanesque design for the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Charles A. Brown, in a biography on Rayfield, summed up Rayfield's life best, when he wrote, "When looked at in historical perspective it was not Rayfield's material wealth, but the manner of his service which was the crowning glory of his life." [1]

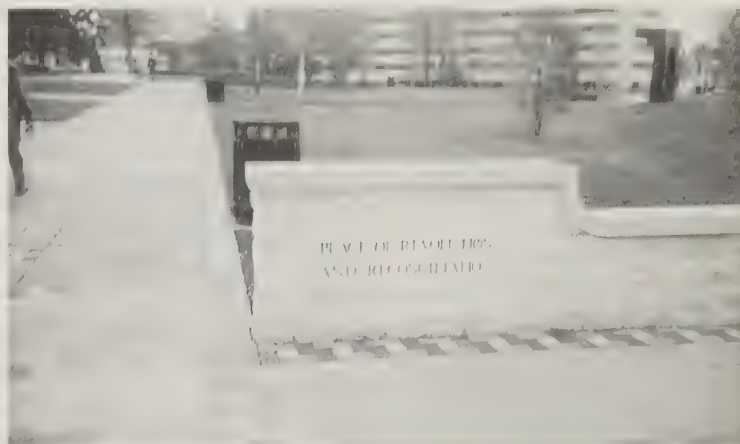
***At the time of the construction of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, neither Rayfield nor Windham had any idea that this church would be remembered for more than its architecture.***

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Entrance gate, patterned brick sidewalks, Kelly Ingram Park, Birmingham



16th Street Baptist Church, patterned brick sidewalk, Birmingham



# AN EVER WIDENING CIRCLE

## *First African Methodist Episcopal Church Los Angeles, California*

*Kennard Design Group, Architects, Los Angeles, California*

The First African Methodist Episcopal Church of Los Angeles is one of the oldest African-American churches in the city, having been founded in the 1870s by Biddy Mason. The present building was designed by pioneer African-American architect Paul R. Williams and was completed in 1969. The church recently has been serving as the main clearinghouse for aid to victims of last year's rebellion in Los Angeles. Its senior pastor, Reverend Cecil Murray, implemented a "program for change" called L.A. Renaissance, which intends to examine the attitudes and address the issues that led to the unrest. Murray, who has gained nationwide exposure due to this congregation's efforts, has appeared on numerous television, radio and cable shows, and has been featured in a number of newspaper and magazine articles.

First A.M.E.'s architectural projects are unique in that they are not for the sole benefit of the church; they will primarily meet the needs of its surrounding community. These three projects of renovation and reconstruction are located in the historically significant Adams-Normandie section of Los Angeles.

### **Cecil L. Murray Education Center**

This Education Center will provide day care and schooling for children from preschool to the fourth grade. The development of this project is a result of the vision of the First African Methodist Episcopal Church to enroll 250 children, ultimately accommodating students through the eighth grade. The project will be located on property that may be accessed from Western Avenue and Hobart Boulevard, where a vocational student training center is situated.

The Education Center is a renovation of two structures: a classroom building



*First African Methodist Episcopal Church (F.A.M.E.), Los Angeles*

and a single-family residence, which are linked by an open space proposed as a playground for the children. The buildings will be upgraded to house a state-of-the-art computer system, which will be utilized to serve both teaching and administrative needs. The classrooms will be transformed into well-lit, uplifting environments through the use of new room finishes and the inclusion of color. A new classroom building to be constructed on the site will also provide an inviting environment for teaching and learning. The second floor classrooms will feature high ceilings illuminated by light from clerestory windows directly below. The window placement allows for even filtration of light conducive to an educational setting.

### **F.A.M.E. AIDS Hospice/Residence**

The AIDS Hospice is planned with the intention of providing comfort and a home-like atmosphere. The church's goal is to provide dignity and humane care to terminally ill AIDS sufferers. The services provided include inpatient care available on an as-needed basis, with a focus on relief of pain and discomfort, regularly scheduled physician visits, and emergency response services. Use of technologies will be minimal; rather, there will be a focus on continuous care and comfort. The hospice will be housed in a 4,100 square foot, two-story, single-family residence—an effort to maintain the calming atmosphere of home, while altering subtle, interior components to facilitate the patients' healthcare needs. The facility will



house two nurses' stations and an office; a storage area; living room/multi-purpose room; three patient restrooms; visitor waiting area and restroom; and a kitchen. The facility will accommodate 19 patient beds in nine patient rooms

The AIDS Residence will provide regular housing for those who are HIV positive and their families. This 4,500 square foot facility will be located adjacent to the AIDS hospice, in a two-story existing structure. The housing unit consists of four 1,100 square foot apartments with 2 bedrooms and 1-1/2 baths. The building will be modernized and refurbished to meet current code requirements.

### F.A.M.E. Multi-Unit Housing

Land has been purchased on South Western Avenue, not far from the AIDS Hospice/Residence, where a multi-unit apartment building will be constructed. This project was realized because the church saw the need to increase the availability of adequate, affordable family housing in the Adams-Normandie area

KDG's design team is currently drafting documents for this 92,000 square foot complex, which will be three stories, including a subterranean level for parking. The 26,000 square foot parking area accommodates 84 vehicles including space for handicapped parking, and houses the building's lobby/mall area, laundry room and storage/trash bin. Multi-Unit Housing's first-level has three interior courtyards, which serve as landscaped recreation areas, and a multi-purpose room. Both offer enjoyment to the entire tenant community. The housing unit consists of thirty-three 4 bedroom/2 bath and two 3 bedroom/2 bath apartments, and a 1 bedroom/1 bath manager's unit. In addition, each unit is equipped with a living room/dining room and a kitchen. □

The F.A.M.E. Church was active as the main clearinghouse for aid to victims of the recent Los Angeles disturbances after the Rodney King verdict. Its minister, Reverend Cecil Murray, appeared on numerous television, radio and cable stations discussing the work of his church. One of the church's celebrity members, Arsenio Hall, was instrumental in making the F.A.M.E. educational center possible



F.A.M.E. Education Center, above and below

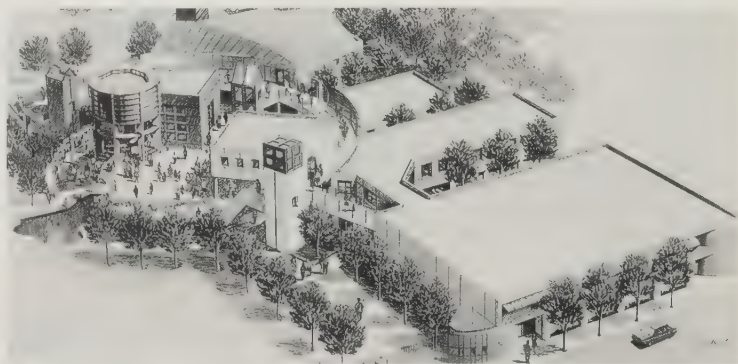


Photo © J. Scott Smith



# A MAN OF COMMITMENT

Lonnie O. Adkins, Architect and Engineer  
1924-1971

By Charles Pohlmann



Lonnie Adkins was truly a multi-faceted person—architect, engineer, churchman, community leader, humanitarian, civil and human rights activist. He was deeply committed to improving opportunities for minorities in the field of architecture as well as in his community and country. Lonnie's strong belief in equality and justice were matched by his high level of activism in the community and involvement in the church.

At his untimely death in 1971, Lonnie was a director of the Saint Paul Urban League and previously had served as its president. He recently had been elected to the national board of trustees of the National Urban League. Lonnie represented the Twin Cities area on the long march from Selma to Alabama's capital with Dr. Martin Luther King.

Lonnie was equally active in church affairs. He was a member of the Executive Board of the Minnesota Synod-Lutheran Church of America, a member of the Board of Parish Education of the LCA and served on various synodical committees concerned with social action and race relations

As co-founder in 1958 of Adkins Associates, Inc. in Saint Paul, Lonnie was concerned with providing promising young minorities job opportunities as draftsmen and designers. His interests and commitments were reflected in his architectural practice: numerous churches, urban renewal housing projects and community centers including the Martin Luther King Center in Saint Paul.



Lonnie Adkins (rt.) with Whitney Young.

## Shared Vision

Lonnie and I met because of our mutual interest in churches and liturgical design. During the period 1962-1971, I worked closely with him on a number of church-related projects. My role was that of a consultant designer for interior and liturgical needs.

Lonnie recognized early the value of suitable liturgical planning and design. We had a shared vision of structure as an enclosure for the activities of the worshipping community. He was concerned for the integrity of the tools—the fabrics such as paraments and vestments, the communion vessels, the emblems and symbols as well as the table, font and

pulpit. These were given highest priority during the design process. He felt that details and furnishings were very much a part of the total religious experience. We developed a mutual respect for our particular capabilities, which led to a productive and satisfying working relationship until his death in 1971.

Our coordination in architectural services at the beginning of a project allowed Lonnie to provide a consistent final solution. We both felt that a building and its contents should express one idea. He was a meticulous note taker and an able participant in building committee meetings, always encouraging comments from his clients.

## Worship Space as Communal Space

Although we had the opportunity to design and produce furnishings and accessories for a number of projects, the ones I consider noteworthy and reflective of our working association include:

Saint John's Lutheran Church, Lakeville, Minnesota, 1963

Bethesda Lutheran Church, South Saint Paul, Minnesota, 1964

Saint Philip the Deacon Lutheran Church, Wayzata, Minnesota, 1964, 1969

Although the worship space of Saint John's Church is rectangular in plan, the platform containing font, table and pulpit is placed in a location well into the main body of seating. This free standing location allows congregants access from all sides. The seating area opposite the main body of seating is used for choir and additional overflow options. The table and pulpit were designed to be omnidirectional to accommodate this arrangement

CHARLES POHLMANN has been a practicing designer and consultant for 36 years, and devotes a major portion of his time to the planning and development of spaces of worship, both new and renovated. For the interior renovation of the Church of the Holy Redeemer in Marshall, Minnesota, he received an interior design award from the Minnesota Society of the American Institute of Architects. He also conducts seminars on liturgical design and church preservation and serves as the North Central Regional Director for IFRAA





St. John's Lutheran Church, Lakeville, Minn.

The font was located in a rather traditional position adjacent to the table and pulpit on the platform. Later we explored more substantive and less passive locations. The sign of water was expressed with a large ceramic bowl suspended in an open framework. I also designed a metal construction located over the table area that is emblematic of the two crowns: the crown of thorns superseded by the crown of resurrection. All furniture in the worship space is movable.

#### Baptismal Place as Focal Point

Lonnie and I felt strongly about the role and place of baptism in the life of the believer. The building for Bethesda Lutheran Church provided the opportunity for the visual expression of the baptismal place as a pool for cleansing and regeneration and as a focus of initiation into the believing community. It is in a recessed area of the floor, centrally located in the space and surrounded with the table platform on three sides by congregants and choir. The arrangement of the space is in a "V" configuration with font area, table and pulpit on a central axis, seating on opposite sides with choir and organ closing the "V" with table and pulpit at the open end.

Characteristically, materials for floors were dark to medium in value. Quarry tile and concrete aggregate were quite typically used. In the recessed baptismal area floor, a glazed tile suggestive of wave patterns was used. Walls were typically brick in a dark to medium brown

gray range with deep brown grouting. Ceiling areas were generally white plaster. He always felt that color should appear in fabrics, vestments and other changeable elements.

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"South St. Paul at that time, though it provided numerous unsavory jobs for blacks in the packing house industry, also prided itself on being an 'all white' city. It was into this setting that Lonnie presented himself as a qualified and capable architect to the building committee. He was quite unpredictably selected over five or six white presenters. This was a breakthrough that I hardly dared hoped for, and that speaks volumes for Lonnie's effervescent bearing, winning personality as well as his skill and creative capacity."

—Merle F. Carlson  
Lutheran Social Ministry of the  
Southwest

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A full wall mural portraying the biblical event that took place at the pool of Bethesda is located in the gathering space directly opposite the entrance doors. The



Bethesda Lutheran Church, South Saint Paul, Minn., above and below



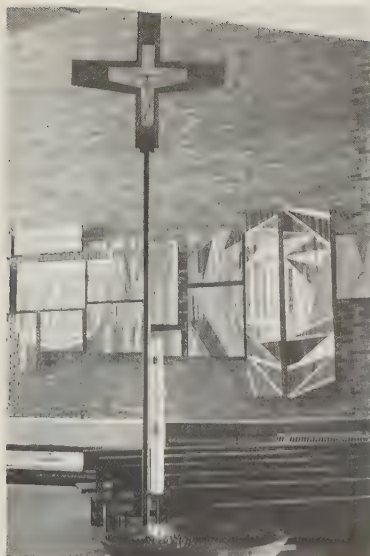
account of the event is narrated in the words of John 5:2-9. The figures are from a woodcut, formed in the "Biblia Pauperum," published in Nordlingen, Germany, in 1471. For the exterior, I developed a fleche (spire) to denote in an historical way the liturgical focus of the interior space.

Bethesda Lutheran Church was, in Lonnie's opinion, his best church. He worked personally in every aspect from design to construction inspection. Much was due to the personal working relationship with Pastor Merle F. Carlson. Bethesda became a standard for office practice following its completion.

#### Baptismal Font as Inviting Entrance

The planning and design of the Church of Saint Philip the Deacon is based on asymmetry, introduction of natural light and a more flowing arrangement. The font, located inside the entrance doors, visually grows out of the aggregate concrete floor. It is massive and supportive of a very large ceramic bowl. Being located





St. Philip the Deacon Lutheran Church,  
Wayzata, Minn

ed centrally in the main entrance aisle, it is both confrontational and inviting, challenging and comforting. The altar, as table, extends across the front of the room, at slightly above floor level, en-

"He created a multicultural awareness in our small community of white, middle-class people, as well as a concern for civil rights during those crucial years of the 1960's."

—David Lindblom  
Minneapolis Area Synod

abling the communicants to gather directly at the table to receive and celebrate bread and renewed beginnings.

A large semi-permanent textile construction was developed for the wall behind the table. Colors range from blues blue-greens for water, sky and creation to yellows and whites for sun, light, faith and presence. Uniting the two areas are the reds and russets for the blood relationship of Christ to humanity. Emerging at this time was the desire for larger gathering spaces where church members could meet. This need was realized by designing a generous area adjacent to an open courtyard. As the space generates around the gathering, font, table and pulpit area and opens to the outside, an

opening coil or scroll movement is suggested.

At the time of planning and construction the Reverend David F. Lindblom pastor, remarked, "Lonnie's firm has evolved into the Adkins Association, Inc. and is a prominent firm in Saint Paul, Minnesota. Originally formed with Reuben Johnson, a pastor's son, the emphasis on church and community-related projects has continued and been maintained. Lonnie would be proud of his fellow designers' projects and achievements.

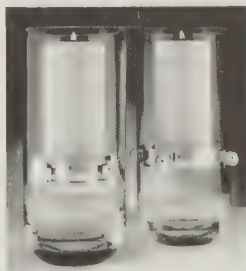
Following his death, I felt honored to design, at the request of Mrs. Adkins, a special grave marker at Oakland Memorial Cemetery in Saint Paul, which is currently undergoing designation as an historic site.

Perhaps it is best to remember Lonnie and his achievements by quoting one of his favorite poets:

If a man does not keep pace with his companions,  
Perhaps it is because he hears a different drum.  
Let him step to the music which he hears,  
However measured or far away.  
—Henry David Thoreau

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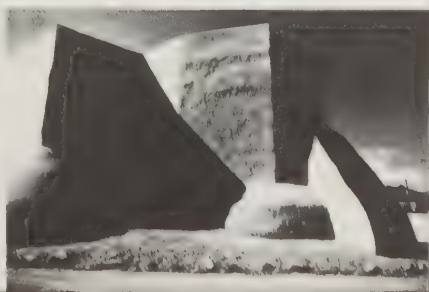
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# A REINVESTMENT IN THE CITY

## Project

Fulton Baptist Church  
Baltimore, Maryland

## Architect

Edward M. Johnson, and Associates  
Baltimore, Maryland

## DESIGN STATEMENT

Many older, urban neighborhoods have been abandoned by businesses and institutions looking for building sites offering safety, modern amenities and growth opportunities. Therefore, it is refreshing to find one institution committed to reinvestment in the inner city of Baltimore, Maryland.

Fulton Baptist Church, a minority congregation of 300, is located one block west of Pennsylvania and North Avenues in the former hub of black social life during the 1950s and early 1960s. The Gothic inspired limestone structure, constructed in 1904, purchased by the Fulton Congregation in 1984, was destroyed by fire in 1989. All that remained after the fire were the four stone walls.

Edward M. Johnson, AIA, Associates was selected from Baltimore's minority architects to design a new 500 seat facility on the existing site and to expand eastward on an adjacent townhouse site owned by the church. The primary design challenge was to develop the proposed facility in accordance with the expanded program, updated building code requirements and a \$1.5 million budget, while retaining three of the perimeter stone walls on the angled property lines—bounded on the west by a 20 foot wide alley street, a 10 foot rear alley on the north, 15 foot wide brick row houses on the east and fronting onto a 12 foot wide sidewalk on North Avenue.

The completed structure houses ground floor offices, classroom, kitchen and a multipurpose room. The first floor sanctuary with raised pulpit, choir and glass front baptistery with an elevated pipe organ loft are accentuated by the colorful faceted glass windows that highlight the angled design elements. To achieve the 500 seat goal, a balcony was designed with fixed platformed seating.

The power of the interior sanctuary is



Remained after fire, Washington, DC



Fulton Baptist Church, Baltimore, Maryland





Fulton Baptist Church, interior



Ron Ceasat Photography

expressed throughout the form of the roof structure with exposed ten inch wide by four feet deep glu-laminated beams, wood decking and purlins

The cost to match limestone on the front facade expansion was prohibitive, therefore, the infill facade to the east was constructed of 18 inch concrete masonry

units faced with brick closely matching in color and texture of the limestone walls

Despite budget and space constraints, the religious edifice completed in the fall of 1992 stands powerfully among its neighbors symbolic of commitment to neighborhood reinvestment, preservation and esthetic revitalization

#### Other Built Religious Facilities

**Canaan Educational Center**, Washington, D.C., Canaan Baptist Church. New addition to house church's educational programs

**St. Luke's Center**, Washington, D.C. 30,000 sq. ft. multi-use center for the Catholic Archdiocese

**St. Vincent de Paul Rectory**, Washington, D.C., Catholic Archdiocese

**Martin Luther King Community Church**, Columbia, Md. New church facility to seat 500 parishioners

**Clinton AME Zion Church**, Rockville, Md. Church expansion and renovation □

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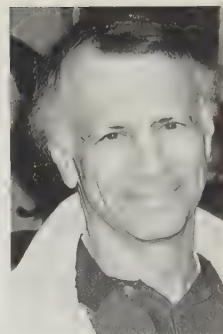
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# MAKING CONNECTIONS: THE AFRICAN AMERICAN ARCHITECT

By Dennis Alan Mann



When I began architecture school at the University of Cincinnati in 1958, I shared the stress and apprehension of a rigorous program of lectures and studios with 100 other classmates. Among those 100, one was a woman. The remaining 99 were white males. Our female classmate managed to survive for six months before withdrawing along with a number of others who for one reason or another, realized that the field of architecture was not for them. At that time, I recall no more than a handful of women in the entire six year program, a program that enrolled over 400 full-time students. Nor do I remember my teachers, all of whom were white males, ever presenting the work of a single woman architect. Today at Cincinnati there are 427 students with 126—or 29 percent of the total—women. Twenty-nine percent is not unusual today and may be higher in other architecture schools across the country. Today, as well students are knowledgeable about the work and reputations of leading women in the profession such as Denise Scott Brown, Zaha Hadid, Billy Tsien, Laurinda Spear, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk and Susan Maxman, the current President of the American Institute of Architects.

This makes all the more dramatic the statistic that in 1958 at Cincinnati there was one African American student in the architecture program. Today, there are

only four. Four students out of 427 students. Still not even one percent! While the number of women students has shown a significant increase, the number of African American students has increased by only three, 34 years later. It was questions raised by statistics such as these (as well as the complete inability of any of our present-day students to identify the work of a single African American architect) that led my colleague Brad Grant and I to begin our examination of the professional status of the African American architect.

Comparative statistics show that the number of women registering to practice architecture continues to increase while the number of African Americans lags behind. For instance, there are 4,530 architects registered to practice in Maryland of whom 293 are women (6.5 percent) while 84 are African American (1.8 percent). In Ohio there are 112 registered architects who are women residents of the state while there are only 37 African Americans. The American Institute of Architects reports that 7 percent of its corporate members are women while only 1 percent are African American. Statistics for both professional degree programs (M. Arch. and B. Arch.) are more encouraging: the percentage of women approaches 30 percent today, and the African Americans nearly 8 percent. Yet no studies have been undertaken to reveal how many from each group successfully complete degrees and continue on to pass state registration examinations to become licensed architects. Undoubtedly women have had a difficult and frustrating time cracking an historically white male dominated field. Unfortunately, the record shows that African Americans continue to struggle to survive, let alone flourish. The point is that while women

and African Americans began entering the profession at about the same time and in the same small numbers, the flow of women has continued to increase while the flow of African Americans has been much slower.

In 1954 *Brown vs. The Board of Education* (Supreme Court decision integrating the public schools in Topeka, Kansas) was only four years old and the civil rights movement, while it had been a strong grass roots movement for decades prior, had yet to spring to full life across the country. It was more difficult then than it is today for a young African American to apply, be accepted, survive architecture school and then find a position in the profession.

African American architects educated between the end of World War II and the early 1970s attest to their lonely battle in a white male dominated field. Robert Madison, a graduate of both Howard and Harvard Universities and now an award-winning architect and a Fellow of the AIA, began his own firm in Cleveland, Ohio because he could not get a position in a white firm. Another young graduate from Miami University in the early 1950s and now a successful architect on the West Coast related his own experience to me at last year's National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) conference. After graduation he telephoned a local architect in Cincinnati to arrange a job interview. He described his interview in the following way:

"When I stepped out of the elevator Mr. X, who was standing at the far end of his office, looked up from his papers at me and turned a beet red. I guess he hadn't expected to see a black architecture graduate since I probably didn't sound 'black' on the telephone. My interview consisted of Mr. X spending the

DENNIS ALAN MANN is a Professor of Architecture in the University of Cincinnati's School of Architecture and Interior Design. The Directory of African American Architects can be purchased by sending a check for \$6 (payable to the University of Cincinnati) to CSPAA, DAAP, ML 016, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH 45221.



entire time trying to convince me that architecture was not the profession for me. He said I would be much happier as a doorman or a porter. I knew immediately that Cincinnati was not the place for me. I left for California as soon as I could."

Today while African Americans make up 12 percent of the population they still represent only one percent of the registered architects. In a recent study Brad Grant and I certified 948 (as of April 1993) as registered architects from a total of approximately 90,000 registered architects in America. This study verified our supposition of the underrepresentation of African Americans in architecture and led to the *Directory of African American Architects* (Nov. 1991) published by the University of Cincinnati's Center for the Study of the Practice of Architecture. One of the goals of the Center has been to develop a deeper and richer understanding of the nature of architectural practice in all of its dimensions. Tracking the many roles that African Americans play in the practice of architecture is one research project among many being undertaken by the Center.

#### The African American Architect

African American architects have had a lengthy and distinguished history in the building of this country. Early practitioners like Joseph Francis Mangin designed New York's City Hall, Benjamin Banneker assisted Pierre Charles L'Enfant in the planning of Washington, D.C., Julian Abel designed the Widener Library at Harvard University and Paul Revere Williams was the architect for a number of Hollywood homes including those of Tyrone Power, Betty Grable and Frank Sinatra. Robert R. Taylor, one of the first African Americans to graduate from the school of architecture at MIT, began a long career as an educator, administrator and campus architect at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama in 1892.

The most current book on African American architects is *African American Architects in Current Practice* (Princeton Architectural Press, 1991) by Jack Travis. The book outlines the long tradition of African American architects in essays by Dr. Richard Dozier, Dean Harry Robinson of Howard University, Harvey Gantt and Dr. Sharon Sutton as well as profiling 35 current practitioners along with their design work. Travis, an architect as well as Spike Lee's cultural consultant for the film *Jungle Fever*, aims "to present people of color in architecture as positive role models

and architecture as an alternative profession to black youth.

The *Directory of African American Architects* is one tool to aid Travis's dream. The *Directory* and its current addendum provides an alphabetized list of 948 registered architects including addresses and states of registration. It also includes a separate listing of women (there are currently 55 registered) and faculty members. Finally, the *Directory* provides a listing of names state by state. We were surprised to discover that nearly 50 percent of African American architects are located in California (143), the District of Columbia (102), New York (120), Texas (58) and Michigan (57).

The *Directory* has had many other uses as well. It has increased opportunities for networking and joint ventures, and has allowed architectural firms and public agencies who wish to increase their minority representation to target at least one of a number of minority groups. It has encouraged architects to join with their peers as mentors for young men and women who are contemplating careers in architecture, who are presently students or who are recent graduates but not yet registered. Finally, it has motivated architects to share a wide range of professional experiences.

It is the sharing of these professional experiences that is so vital for African American architects, especially those who either own their own firms or those contemplating beginning a new firm. Minority owned practices like Robert P. Madison International in Cleveland, Charles A. McAfee in Wichita, Wendell I. Campbell & Associates in Chicago, Stull and Lee in Boston and KDG Architecture and Planning in Los Angeles have weathered innumerable storms that threatened their survival as viable practices capable of producing noteworthy and design award-winning work.

As Harvey Gantt pointed out in his keynote speech at the NOMA conference in Atlanta in 1991, "We've had to justify our competence daily—everyday our competence is on the line." Gantt, whose parents told him in the early 1960s that he ought to have his head examined if he intended to become an architect, reminded his audience that there are African American architects still here "because of their tenaciousness to succeed."

The design talent that lies bound up in the community of African American architects is enormous. It eagerly awaits

(continued on page 31)



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# A COMPLEX CONVERSION

## St. Margaret's Convent, Roxbury, Massachusetts



Kirk A. Sykes

### Project

St. Margaret's Convent  
Roxbury, Massachusetts

### Architects

Primary Group, Inc.  
Kirk A. Sykes, AIA  
Boston, Massachusetts

### General Contractor

Metric Construction

Engineers: CYGNA, Boston

Landscape Architects: BSS Design,  
Falmouth

Specifications: Kalin Associates

Photography: Warren Patterson, Newton  
Lower Falls, Mass

### DESIGN STATEMENT

The purpose of this project is to convert a current nursing campus into a new \$3.8 million Episcopal convent for the Sisters of St. Margaret who have lived on Boston's historic Beacon Hill for the last 100 years. Last year, stringent state requirements forced the Sisters to close the nursing home and begin to think about this nursing home complex as their new home.

After being cloistered in an elegant but dense property, they are now moving to a rambling two-acre urban wild. The design has to accommodate a difficult site with 30 foot croppings and extensive terracing. The Sisters' primary desires were that the building exploit the spectacular view of the city.

Most important was that their new chapel be open, airy and flexible, accommodating multiple altar locations. It was important to change the institutional image of the current complex and unify the many disparate buildings that are scat-



St. Margaret's Convent, Roxbury, Mass.

tered about the site.

St. Margaret's Convent is a combination of new construction and renovation on a two-acre former nursing home complex. The existing site and buildings have evolved over the last 125 years beginning with the construction of the National Historic Landmark Garrison House, the home of one of Boston's most famous slavery abolitionists.

The current 48,500 square foot campus grew as the Sisters added additional structures to facilitate the nursing care of their patients. A two-story 29,000 square foot brick structure was added in 1963 which contained nursing wards, kitchens and a chapel. Other structures on the site included a Victorian carriage house, a four-story brownstone and a two-family frame house.

### DESIGN SOLUTION

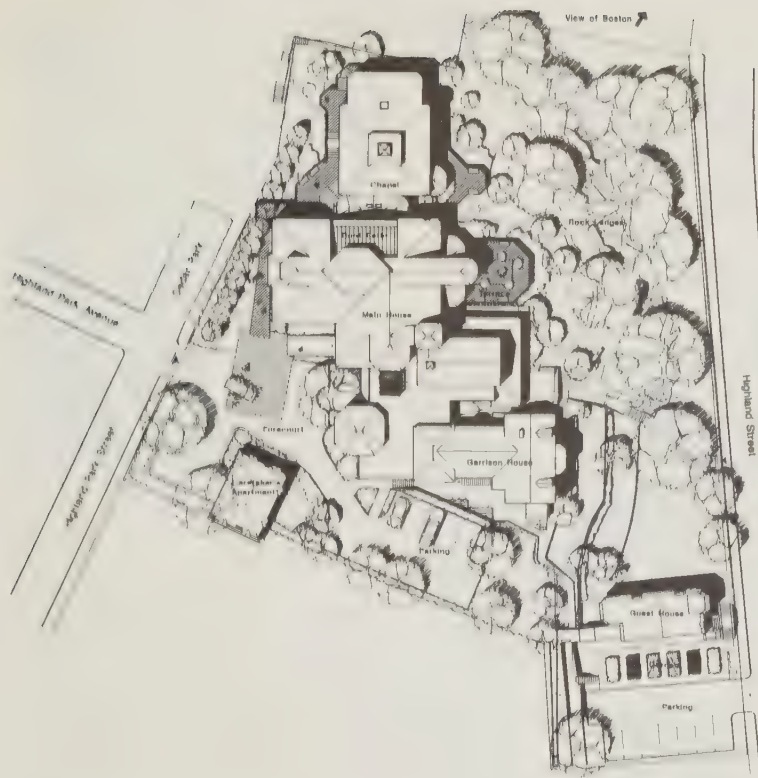
#### The New Chapel Building

The chapel is a three-story hipped roof building which is connected to the residential portion of the convent on two levels. The lower level of the chapel is a library/conference area and the upper level is a two-story clear-span chapel with a zigzagged ceiling to battle sound along with niched walls. The Sisters are a musical order and acoustics were a major factor in the design of the chapel. Subtle ecclesiastic symbols are integrated throughout, starting with the cruciform structural system and carried through to the glazing and window compositions.

#### The Residence Building

The 29,000 square foot existing nursing home structure is completely renovated





Site Plan

and a new third and fourth floor are added to accommodate additional Sisters and the all-important roof patio. The existing nursing wards had to be reorganized to allow for private rooms with every two rooms sharing a bath. Common tub rooms and tea rooms have been introduced along the common corridor.

The Sisters are a silent order and no speaking or noise is allowed in the corridors. The two new levels provide a south facing solarium connecting both levels and a roof patio and meditation room on the top level overlooking Boston. The entry level contains the administrative offices, refectory, kitchen, art gallery and infirmary. A new entry and arcade have been added to connect all the buildings in a clearly understandable manner and define the main entry off the fore court.

The structure that supports the upper two levels is totally independent and the columns which support the building are expressed as pilasters on the exterior of the existing building.

#### The Garrison House

This national historic landmark structure had historical easements that had to be respected. Therefore, an extensive resto-

ration effort was undertaken to revive this building that was the start of the campus. Unfortunately, the existing nursing home building was irresponsibly grafted onto this historical structure.

We have tried to integrate the Garrison building into the campus by reintroduc-

ing its roof form and octagonal bays in the new campus building. We also tried to respect the smaller scale historical structure by stepping up the new building masses as they recede from the historic Garrison house. Small unusable niches that were left by the merger of the old and new buildings have been turned into small landscape alcoves.

#### The Carriage House

This historic structure has been restored to include an apartment for a priest above a garage/storage area below. The existing mansard roofed building underwent primarily interior improvements.

#### The Brownstone Guest House

This one-time residence is now converted to guest rooms with common baths for parents of children who are staying at nearby hospitals. Renovations required the addition of new formal entry steps and octagonal egress stairs at the rear of the building.

In summary, St. Margaret's Convent was a difficult combination of rehabilitation and new construction. New gabled copper roofs and bay shapes have been added to unify the new and old structures and take cues from the historical Garrison house. New links and arcades have been added to sort out the difficult connection of all the disparate structures and to accommodate the need for public access as well as the cloistered lifestyle of the Sisters. The new chapel structure addresses the need for flexible worship space and introduces subtle ecclesiastical symbols. The new fourth level introduces



Photo: Warren Patterson © 1993



St. Marguerite : Convent chapel



An entrance way in convent

the patio and meditation space that was important to the client. Perhaps most difficult of all, the multiple buildings are sited to work with the difficult topography and historic easements present on the site. Finally, the site was organized to provide walks, meditation areas and vantage points considering the needs of the Sisters whose average age is 70 years. [ ]

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# A DILEMMA FOR THE ARCHITECTURAL LIBRARIAN

By Vinson E. McKenzie

During the course of training to become a professional librarian, great emphasis is placed on the reference question. Librarians are taught that queries may be divided into two general types: (1) the user asks for a known item and (2) the user asks for information without any knowledge of a specific source.

In either case, information concerning the African-American architect is not easily obtained since there are not many specific documents covering the works of African-American architects in an architecture library. Although, in recent times we have seen more articles and a developing interest in publishing books on the subject.

There is much work to be done towards bridging the gap in this great history. Jack Travis's soon-to-be-released book, *American Black Architects*, and other works soon to be completed by scholars are examples of this increased interest.

Detailed and involved questions requiring specific amounts of knowledge and sophistication to render a satisfactory answer concerning African-American architects—even for the professional architecture librarian, is not an easy chore. If Sheila Student asked for biographical information on John A. Lankford, the first professionally practicing African-American architect, the librarian would nor-

mally think of biographical sources, such as *MacMillan Encyclopedia of Architects*, *Contemporary Architects*, *American Architects Directory*, *Who's Who in Architecture* or other reference sources. None of these important architecture sources have covered the first practicing African-American architect.

**Detailed and involved questions requiring specific amounts of knowledge and sophistication to render a satisfactory answer concerning African-American architects, even for the professional architecture librarian, is not an easy chore.**

The query could become more complicated if Sheila required an in-depth comparison between John A. Lankford and Julian Frances Abele, who by some sources has also been called the first professionally practicing African-American architect. Sources for comparison of the controversy would be hard to find in the average architecture library.

Due to the gaps in published materials

concerning African-American architects, original data would be desirable in bridging this gap. However, libraries generally must rely on published data fitting the categories of primary sources, secondary sources, and tertiary sources.

There are few architecture libraries holding primary sources on the African-American architect. The only exception here would be the few journal articles published in professional journals. Indexes would serve as a secondary source in the architecture library.

Since race is not indicated in the indexes, there would be some difficulty in accessing lesser known African-American architects. Tertiary sources such as encyclopedias, biographical sources and dictionaries may contain small amounts of information concerning the African-American architect. These general sources lack theoretical and philosophical ideas of the architecture. In most cases they lack having the architectural delineations of the design.

While there are many individuals working at publishing sources related to the African-American architect, the architecture librarian must continue to struggle with day-to-day reference questions.

The ideal source to bridge this gap in architecture history would contain information about slave artisans, the pioneering architect, the beginning of professional architects, and the contemporary architect. This source should contain a biographical history, a biography, a list of works completed by the individual architect, and some delineation of the architect's work.

Those of us involved with architecture education invite as many individuals interested in publishing works containing architecture completed by African-American architects to do so, to write this virgin history. □

VINSON E. MCKENZIE is Head of Auburn University's Architecture Library. He is president of the Association of Architecture School Librarians and the curator of the traveling exhibit, "African American Architects and Builders: A Historical Overview." McKenzie holds an undergraduate degree in history from Albany State College and a master's in library science from Atlanta University. He is a member-at-large of the Alabama Historical Commission, Black Heritage Council.

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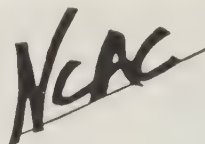
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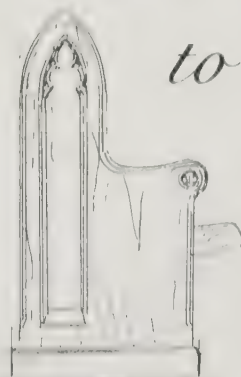
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# CROSSED CULTURES: A REPORT

By Betty H. Meyer, Editor



I listened to the several speakers at a recent conference entitled "Crossed Cultures" sponsored by the Arts Commission of the National Council of Churches and Yale Institute of Sacred Music, and wondered what kind of religious architecture will emerge from this electronic age as its young addicts grow into maturity. In fact, I wondered whether all architecture might be secular as William Fore, lecturer in communications at Yale, told us that the Gospel as we know it has been replaced by a new kind of gospel—"a world view, an inventive system of religious faith and morals which is far more appealing, more attractive, more entertaining than the 'old Gospel.'"

If this is true, then the traditional forms of religious architecture as we have known them will inevitably be replaced with appropriate new forms. Are there architectural prophets today whose imaginations are conjuring up such designs? Who will be in those congregations to make building decisions? The old symbols will no longer have any meaning. The Church may be apart from, and not a part of

What is the new gospel? Should we welcome or discourage it? What does it have to say to those of us of another generation? Dr. Fore reminded us that we have been educated to think rationally, analytically and to conclude with propositional statements. "But our canons and



"Frayed Christ" by C. Kapikian, hung in Marquand Chapel, Yale Divinity School, April 1993

categories no longer work with the ever-increasing electronic medium that now pervades and saturates the modern consciousness. Television is broadcast into every home via the electromagnetic spectrum and is transferred onto film for screenings at our local theaters, carried on scores (and soon to be hundreds) of

channels via copper wires and optical fibers, retransmitted across villages and continents with equal ease, rented in every city and hamlet as cassettes and now plugged into our own computers in the form of discs and interactive videos!" This is a strange and alien world for most of us except, of course, the young

The bombardment of so many images evokes feelings more rapidly than we can possibly analyze them. This change to feelings is basic. It modifies everything we have known before, including even the way we understand the world. Instead of a society comprehended as a unified reality, we have moved into a multiform system of relationships with no single integrating element. The New God of feeling, Dr. Fore says, is a method of immediate problem solving—the means is identified with the end. It woos people and uses their needs to create other needs, and to accept the inherent goodness and naturalness of an all-encompassing multi-national production and consumption system. And people love it!

A succession of speakers who have been doing research in this field described the present condition. Marian Dolan, a professor and musician from Haverford College, and Nancy Vickers from the University of Southern California played contemporary music including "Jesus Rock" and fortunately gave us the lyrics to read. For example

We're gonna rock and have a good time  
 Tonight's the night, the night we move  
 Together we will stand to rock the land  
 We're gonna rock for something new  
 We're gonna rock for something true  
 Tonight's the night  
 So let's lift up our hands  
 Jesus, King, King of Kings  
 Jesus makes me wanna sing

Is this sacred music? Does sacramental music require specific form? Bear in mind that this rock music crosses all denominational lines, and white, middle class lines as well. Its artists come from all races, all religions and liturgical boundaries. It draws millions of young people together to say, "We're trying to bring Jesus to a dying world. This is more than a lifestyle, we want to show them God through us."

Gregor Goethals from the Rhode Island School of Design told us that when there was a vacuum left in religious meaning and a bias against sacred images, popular culture moved in to fill the void. Television draws the ordinary person into extraordinary places and situations, and we are permitted to live the great rituals of our time, such as the funeral of JFK and Martin Luther King, or the Gulf War. The television stories of Archie and Edith, the Cosby family, and the Golden Girls seem more authentic and familiar than the Bible stories. Dr. Goethals talked also of the growing disagreement of what does constitute art. Many felt that the abstract images of Kandinsky and Mondrian were universal in their communication of the spiritual, but in this late twentieth century it has become the artist who is the iconoclast.

The audience laughed but grew serious when Michael Malone, a graduate of Yale Divinity School and the director of ABC's *One Life to Live*, described the world of soap opera. Twenty million people

watch for one hour every weekday, 285 times a year, and this audience includes college professors, students, truck drivers, housewives, etc. He faces the challenge of being part of a team process that addresses almost every social issue, including the breaking down of stereotypes of the clergy, and creating believable characters who struggle with good and evil.

It was John Cook, Dean of the Yale Institute and soon-to-be Director of the Luce Foundation, who told us that there is a superfluity of Christian art that no longer has anything to say. He led us through a fascinating slide series showing images that succeed but many that do not. "We have to be honest," he said, "about what religion has done and is doing to the world." It is the image of the tortured Christ that relates to our tortured world today. He asked us to look at Christian imagery from every period, including our own, and to transcend them all, under the Living God.

His words set the stage for the speaker we had all been eager to hear. Andres Serrano. Readers will remember that he was in the center of the Robert Mapplethorpe controversy over whether the National Endowment should have funded their work. More than 175,000 letters and two million dollars were spent by Fundamentalists to register their objections. I remember that I was so incensed that as a total stranger I picked up the telephone and called Serrano in New York to tell him that not all churches and congregations are so oblivious to the civil rights and freedom of artists.

Andres Serrano is a well-trained, serious artist who impressed us with his intelligence and humility. He admitted to a love-hate relationship with the Church, but has never denied the love or the influence that religion has had in his life.

He described his photography as a medium and showed us a recent series of European church interiors and portraits of clergy and lay people that are haunting in detail. Haunting because they made us acutely aware of decay and restoration, of loneliness and dedication, of imprisonment and freedom.

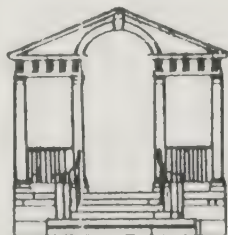
Our eyes "saw" the physicality of these buildings and people, but Serrano also made us aware of the reality behind the surface. He told us that he averages 36 exposures of a subject before he gets one that satisfies. Perhaps the most moving of the photographs were those addressed to death and mortality.

He received permission to take a series of photographs in a morgue, and I thought immediately that I would look away from the screen, but with the probing, gentle eye of the artist, he found the spiritual essence of the homeless, the victim of a stabbing and drowning, the child victim of abuse. The ugliness of their wounds seemed to become stigmata and their deaths transfigurations. It seemed to me that the purity of the artist's sight drew a veil from the unseeing eye of the observer and that pure truth was revealed.

#### Is There a Solution to the Dilemma?

It was the professor of American religious history, Harry Stout of Yale, who reminded us that the American Church has always been people-oriented, that it never has been identified, as has Europe with established status and fixed hierarchy. Religion was supposed to be the people's friend and the clergy to appropriate new styles of preaching that were dramatic and entertaining.

Many groups were content with no creed but the Bible. His optimistic feeling is that Americans may be more secularized, but they are still incurably reli-



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gious. Since it is a fact of history that after a religion wanes there is no soul, we may well be in an iron cage of our own making if we do not become sensitized to the present dilemma

The problem is that there is no overarching reality in a pluralistic world with its widely discrepant meanings. At what point do we draw the line with contemporary culture? At what point are we unfaithful to our own faith? Is heaven being stormed by the back door? Each person must decide for him or herself. We have gone too far in democratization to back out now

William Willamon of Yale lamented the fact that Christians today have lost the language to understand what the Church is talking about. A new advancement may be necessary for a new Church to emerge but we cannot understand popular culture until the Gospel gives us a way to see it. We are struggling for new ways even when our culture lives as if God were dead. The artist has an amazing ability to allow people to disagree, because the artist is free. What would happen if we gave the Bible to the artist and said, "Tell us what you get out of it?" We must find a way to witness to a different Reality.

Dominating each worship service of the conference in Marquand Chapel was the great painting of Catherine Kapikian, Director of the Gallery at Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C. and IFRAA member. Each of us was asked to file slowly to the chancel and to look closely at this crucified Christ in the midst of the modern day and to hear the echo of the Gospel: Change thyself. Change thyself. □

## THE AFRICAN AMERICAN ARCHITECT

(continued from page 23)

the myriad of opportunities that has often been taken for granted by a presently white male dominated profession. We are just beginning to witness the contributions to architecture that minorities who had previously been denied full access to the profession are making. And should the contributions, in addition, be infused with fresh concepts and their unique visions for our society, we may witness the unfolding of complete and unprecedented possibilities for architecture. □

## Books

Reviewed by Betty H. Meyer

**GREAT AMERICAN LANDMARKS ADVENTURE BOOK.** Order from: Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402-9325. Stock Number 024-005-01105-6. \$3.25 per copy with no handling fee; orders of 100 at a 25% discount

If you want your children or grandchildren to learn why certain buildings deserve to be designated as historical landmarks, you should order the new *Great American Landmarks Adventure Book*. It illustrates 43 landmarks with line drawings beginning with prehistoric cave paintings in Billings, Montana and ending with the Saturn V Launch vehicles. Each site was selected to make a point about what people have done in the past, how it has affected our present, and how it will shape our future. In fact, the black and white drawings invite crayons, pencils and pens, or water colors. I was fascinated to follow the chronology and wished that I could say that I had visited each one

There is a Teacher's Guide, which shows how this book can be used for classroom discussions and activities. The relationship between the drawings (Roxie Munro) and the paragraph text (Kay Weeks) is well delineated. Whether with parent, grandparent, or teacher this book should provide many happy hours.

\* \* \*

**BERNARD MAYBECK: VISIONARY ARCHITECT.** Text by Sally B. Woodbridge. Photography by Richard Barnes. 150 Color Plates, 91 black & white, Abbeville Press, 488 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022, (212) 888-1969. \$55.

It was on an IFRAA tour in Berkeley that I first visited Maybeck's masterpiece, First Church of Christ Scientist, and I remember that the tour director had a hard time persuading all of us that we must move on. We felt equally drawn to the inside and to the outside of this church. We were fascinated with wood that was stained with color and with added vivid colors for accents. It was easy to see the influence of Maybeck's father who was a German master-builder of furniture. We were told that Maybeck specified the col-

ors of the plants in the garden and for the rooftop planters. When we discussed his style we were forced to say that it was eclectic—fusing Gothic with Byzantine, Romanesque with Mediterranean, etc. But there was no denying that this didn't matter—the genius of Maybeck made it work, and one left with a strong desire to return

Sally Woodbridge, an architectural critic and historian who lives in Berkeley, covers the total of Maybeck's work in this handsome book. Richard Barnes' photographs succeed in showing us the warmth, informality and imagination inherent in them all

The reader may remember that I reviewed a biography of O'Neil Ford in the last issue and I am struck with how strongly both of these architects were influenced by the arts/crafts movement and how they had the courage to create and maintain individual lifestyles. Maybeck was born in Greenwich Village in New York. Impatient with study and apprenticeship, he went to Paris and enrolled in the Ecole des Beaux Arts. Though not a religious person he does write of a religious experience at the St. Germain de Pres Church

"There is something bigger and more worthwhile than the things we see about us, the things we live by and strive for. There is an undiscovered beauty and divine excellence just beyond us. Let us stand on tip toe, forgetting the nearer things and grasp what we may."

Returning to the U.S. he took his family to the Bay area where he enjoyed the remainder of his life. He and his Annie belonged to a Bohemian Club for over 45 years and lived a colorful personal life. It is sad that fires in 1906 and 1920 destroyed the two homes they had built together, but the First Church of Christ Scientist and the Palace of Fine Arts for the 1915 International Exposition will take their places in architectural history. He founded the Architectural Dept. at the University of California and worked with his student, Julia Morgan, on Principia College in Elmhurst, Illinois, receiving the AIA Gold Medal in 1951. He died a year after Annie, telling his children: "I go way out there....and it's getting harder and harder to come back."

**BODYING FORTH.** Aesthetic Liturgy  
Patrick W. Collins, Paulist Press, 997 Mac  
Arthur Blvd., Mahwah, NJ 07430. Paper  
back \$12.95.

How does one define ritual? The author defines it as an aesthetic form that appeals to the imagination so that one can experience transcendence. The question then becomes what is aesthetic and what is not and thus considerable disagreement—often between artist/architect and congregation.

If words predominate in liturgy, the sense of mystery is likely to be lost because they address and engage in discursive reason. Collins believes that the liturgy must be embodied in images, symbols, myths and ritual action. He quotes Ralph Adams Cram who spoke of liturgy as "an assembling of all the arts—music, poetry, drama, ceremony. It is not an art of free construction. It must be neither novelty nor unlimited creativity. It invites us to discover once again the beauty of our tradition."

One senses that this writer understands not only the theory but that he has struggled with its practical aspects also. The book is dedicated to the Bishop and diocese of Peoria where he served as Director of Worship from 1979-1987. Be-

lieving that Vatican II reforms revealed a certain amnesia about forms of worship he deals with the problems of priests, liturgy committees, musicians, the assembly and preachers.

Father Weakland, archbishop of Milwaukee, notes that the author analyzes the symbolic acts of liturgy, but does not destroy them. Rather he helps the reader and all participants in liturgy to follow the logic inherent in the symbol.

*Bodying Forth*, the title of the book is taken from Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*. "Imagination bodies forth the forms of things unknown."

**DISFIGURING: Art, Architecture, Religion.** Mark C. Taylor, University of Chicago Press, 6801 Ellis Ave., Chicago, IL 60637, (312) 702-7700. \$45.

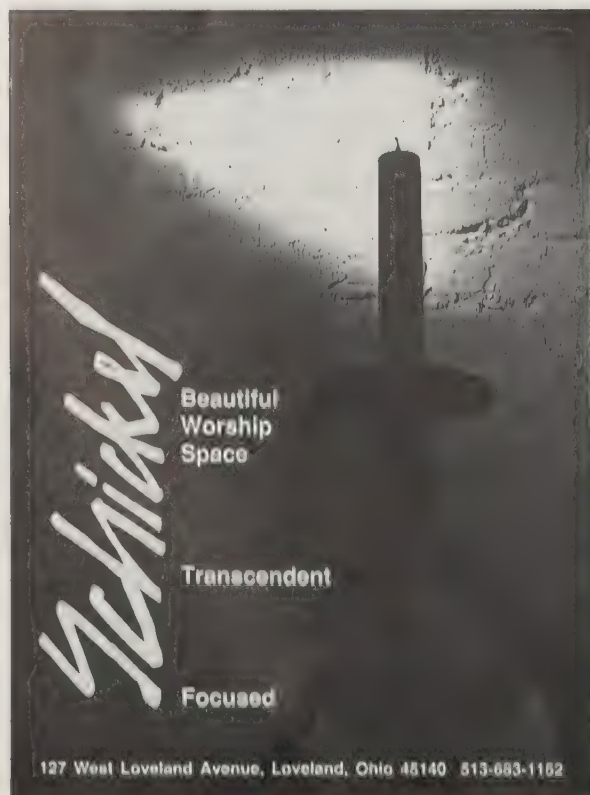
Though many of our greatest modern painters and architects have insisted on a spiritual significance to their work most of us are aware that contemporary art historians and architects avoid any discussion of religion. Conversely, to be fair, contemporary philosophers and theologians mostly ignore the visual arts. This book sets out deliberately to discover the hidden links that bind the two to-

gether. The author is Mark C. Taylor, a professor in the Department of Religion at Williams College in Massachusetts.

It is his thesis that abstract painting and high Post-Modern architecture disfigure because they remove designs, symbols and ornaments. Pop art and Post-Modern architecture disfigure with playful images and superficial reductions. It is the De-Constructive artist such as Anselm Kiefer and the De-Constructive architect, Eisenmann, who attempt to figure the unfigurable and give us the possibility of a re-configuration of the sacred for our own age.

He explores the religious dimensions of 20th century visual art and shows them as a powerful resource for the theologian. Heretofore he thinks theologians have not analyzed contemporary culture carefully enough, failing to grasp the impact technology has made on both the society and religion.

His hope lies in the recognition that both artist/architect and theologian deal with the unthought, with interstitial space and intermediate time. It is here that meanings filter through of the Mystery, and here that art and religion can again work together. I think of Helen Vendler's phrase "reaching out into the void, in search of a returned pressure." [ ]



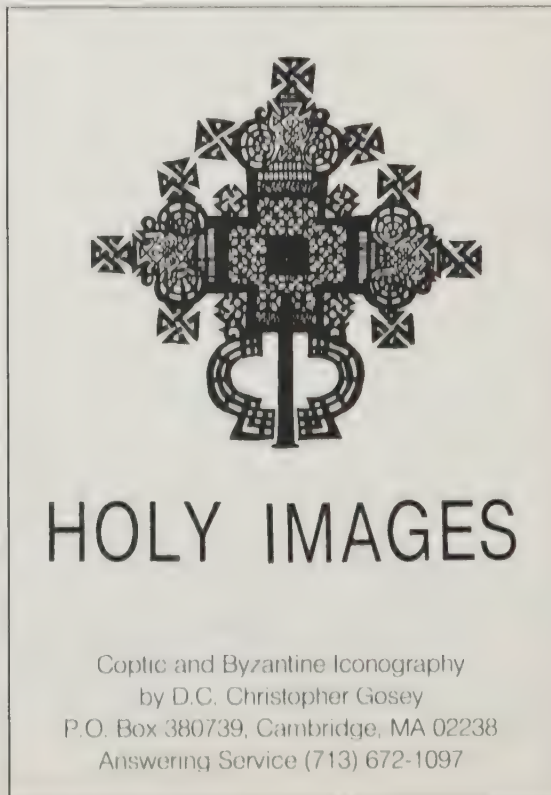
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# ARTISTS SPEAK TO THE CHURCHES

The following is the first draft of a statement composed by 19 artists during a series of three discussions at the May 1992 FORM/REFORM Conference in Minneapolis. It is reprinted here with permission from *Environment & Art* newsletter, March 1993, David Philippart, Editor

When the statement is amended and approved, it will be distributed to church publications around the country. Artists who were not part of the original discussion but who would like to sign their names to the statement, may write to David Philippart, Liturgy Training Publications, 1800 North Hermitage Avenue, Chicago, IL 60622-1101

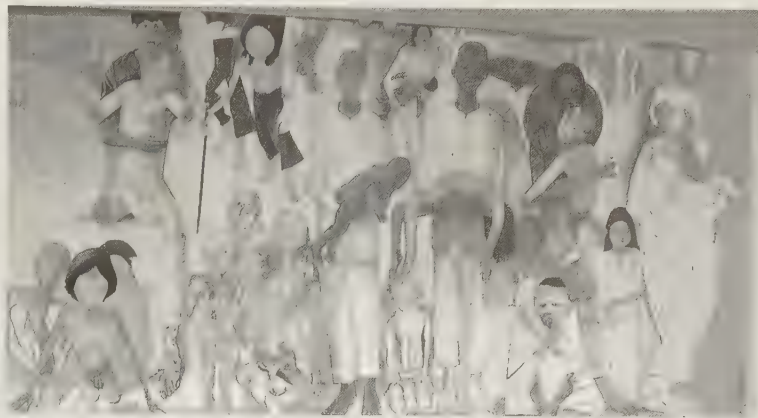
Artists who work for the churches seek the full expression of an incarnational spirituality that allows us to see and to evoke for others the sacred in all things. Artists have a prophetic mission to address the whole of life, not only what is comfortable for a church at any given time. Furthermore, the way in which artists address the whole of life in their work will not always be conventional

We ask the churches to trust our spirituality—our way of praying—as it manifests itself in our creativity. We look at our work as a visual language that speaks heart to heart. Sacred art and art for liturgy thus need to be judged by standards different than those applied to written dogma and doctrine

We ask the churches to revive education in the arts as part of their catechetical mission, from formal training in church schools—kindergarten through college—to efforts in adult education via parish seminars, bulletin essays and collections of reading and viewing materials. We particularly encourage a revival of the study of Christian art history

When the churches are in need of vessels, vestments, stained-glass windows or devotional art—either to serve the liturgy or to furnish parish buildings—we ask that they seek out artists for commissions rather than rely on catalog goods.

A good relationship between a parish and an artist is characterized by mutual respect among the artist, the parishioners, the architect, the pastor, the liturgical design consultant, committee members and construction professionals. Such respect leads to open communica-



*Vietnam painting by Jack Wolfe.*

tion, one result of which is a written agreement between the artist and the parish

Crucial to the agreement between an artist and a parish is just compensation. We strongly urge that churches do not ask for and that artists do not give free sketches. It is unfair to the artist, who must earn a living, and it is unfair to the church, who may not receive an artist's best effort if the sketches are done without remuneration. It is unethical because other professionals—architects, for example—do not supply free drawings.

We suggest instead the following procedures for churches to follow in commissioning artists: First, investigate various artists' past works by consulting other clients and/or searching through galleries or publications. Second, interview a few artists and request to see their portfolios. Third, choose an artist based on past works, the portfolio and the interview.

If a parish decides to organize a design competition, we suggest the following procedures: First, the parish draws up some design parameters and issues them with a schedule to a select group of artists chosen by reviewing past works in other churches, in galleries or in publications. Second, each artist offers minimal-design sketches and a concept presentation, for which the parish pays a nominal fee. Third, the parish chooses from among the presentations made and grants the commission.

We appreciate the fact that liturgical

design consultants suggest artists for certain projects and encourage the commissioning of artists for parish projects. However, we find it unconscionable that the consultant would take a percentage of the commission for doing so.

Finally, we would like to address our colleagues. We urge artists who work for the churches always to have a written contract or letter of agreement. For renovation or new building projects, we suggest that art be handled by a contract independent of the construction. Payments should follow a schedule according to the progress of the work.

We artists need to discuss the business aspects of our profession, and to design business training opportunities for ourselves to be offered at national or regional conferences.

For artists just beginning to seek church commissions, we welcome you. We suggest that you build a portfolio of theoretical designs, and we encourage you to publish drawings, designs and concepts as a way of gaining attention and receiving invitations for commissions.

Original participants: Ade Bethune, Margaret Cavanaugh, Rick Findora, Judy Finnegan, Carol Anderson Joslin, Leo Keegan, Ed Kish, Jerry Krauski, Theresa Krauski, Mary Christa Kroening, Steve Melahn, Betty Meyer, Maureen McGuire, Josephine Niemann, David Philippart, David Ramsey, Gabriella Rogenski, Lucille F. Smith, David M. Warner, Norman Woehle. □

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## Calendar of Events

- October 8-9      **IFRAA Board of Directors Meeting & Seminar**  
Special Membership Meeting  
Minneapolis, MN  
*Contact:* Charles Pohlmann, (612) 825-5672
- October 8-9      **North Central Regional Meeting**  
Minneapolis, MN, Plymouth Congregational Church  
Friday, October 8, Program Meeting  
Saturday, 9 a.m., Membership Meeting to discuss and vote on Professional Interest  
Area Status with AIA  
Afternoon, IFRAA Board Meeting  
*Contact:* Dr. Albert Fisher, (919) 489-3359; or Charles Pohlmann, (612) 825-5672
- November 7-9      **The Duke Endowment—Housing the Spirit: Worship and Sacred Space**  
Durham, NC  
*Contact:* Dr. Albert F. Fisher, (919) 489-3559  
*Lodging:* Sheraton Imperial, (919) 941-5050
- 1994
- January      **IFRAA Executive Committee Meeting**  
IFRAA National Office, Washington, D.C.
- May 13-16      **IFRAA Participation at AIA National Conference and Board of Directors Meeting**  
Los Angeles, CA  
*Contact:* Dr. Albert Fisher, (919) 489-3359
- July 1      **Deadline for 1994 IFRAA Architectural Design Awards Program**  
*Contact:* James M. Graham, AIA, (217) 787-9380 or  
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- August 1      **Deadline for 1994 IFRAA Visual Art Awards Program**  
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- August      **IFRAA Executive Committee Meeting**  
IFRAA National Office, Washington, D.C.
- Oct. 14-16      **IFRAA Biennial National Conference and Board of Directors Meeting**  
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